

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DACCA 05227 291040Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8497
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S E C R E T DACCA 5227

EXDIS

EO 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PINS, PFOR, BG, IN
SUBJ: ARMS ASSISTANCE INFORMALLY SOUGHT

REF: DACCA 5119

1. MAJORS FAROOK RAHMAN AND KHANDAKAR ABDUR RASHID
TELEPHONED EMBASSY YESTERDAY (OCTOBER 28) SEEKING APPOINT-
MENT WITH AMBASSADOR, HAVING SENT WORD INDIRECTLY THAT THEY
WISHED TO SEE HIM BEFORE HIS CALL ON THE PRESIDENT SCHEDULED
OCTOBER 29. CALL WAS SET FOR MID-AFTERNOON WITH POLITICAL
COUNSELOR PRESENT.

2. MEETING PROVED NEAR-MIRROR IMAGE OF THAT BETWEEN MAJORS
AND POLITICAL COUNSELOR ONE WEEK PREVIOUSLY. AFTER
DISORGANIZED PREAMBLE, MAJORS FINALLY REHEARSED THEIR
ESTIMATE OF INDIAN INTENTIONS. FOLLOWING A LENGTHY
DISQUISITION ASSERTING THAT AUGUST 15 COUP UNDERTAKEN
IN LARGE MEASURE TO PREVENT APPROACHING ABSORPTION OF
BANGLADESH BY INDIA, THEY SAID THREAT REMAINS. ELABORATING
ON PREVIOUS WEEK'S SCRIPT SOMEWHAT, THEY STRESSED THAT
TANGAIL INCIDENT WAS ON OF AN ANTICIPATED SERIES WHICH
INTENDED DRAW MILITARY AWAY FROM DACCA. WHEN THIS ACCOMPLISHED,
HELICOPTER-BORNED INDIAN TROOPS DRESSED IN BANGLADESH ARMY
UNIFORMS MIGHT SEEK TO SEIZE DACCA AND TO ESTABLISH PUPPET
GOVERNMENT.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 DACCA 05227 291040Z

3. WHEN THEY BEGAN TO REASSERT THEIR NEED FOR ARMS,

AMBASSADOR INDICATED FAMILIARITY WITH THEIR EARLIER CONVERSATION WITH POLITICAL COUNSELOR AND RESTATED VIEW THAT WE WOULD BE RELUCTANT TO ENTER ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP, REMINDING MAJORS THAT WE SEE OUR MOST EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO BANGLADESH'S FUTURE IN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT WE WOULD ALWAYS OF COURSE GIVE CAREFUL CONSERATION TO ANY REQUESTS MADE TO US BY THE BANGLADESH GOVERNMENT AND RECALLED POLITICAL COUNSELOR'S ADIVCE THAT ANY SUCH REQUEST IN ARMS FIELD, IF IT WERE TO BE MADE, MGITH BE MADE BY BANGLADESH EMBASSY TO DEPARTMENT OF STATE. THE MAJORS PRESSED NO FURTHER, AND THE MEETING QUICKLY ENDED.

4. COMMENT: INSPIRATION OF MAJORS REMAIN AS MURKY AS BEFORE. AGAIN THEY GAVE NO INDICATION THEY ACTING UNDER ANY INSTRUCTIONS. NEVERTHELESS, IT SEEMS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT THEY CAME TO SEE WHAT EFFECT, IF ANY, LAST WEEK'S APPROACH TO POLITICAL COUNSELOR MIGHT HAVE HAD AND THAT THEY WERE INTENDING TO ADVISE PRESIDENT RE WISDOM OF BROACHING ARMS ISSUE. WE ARE INCLINED TO DOUBT THAT GOVERNMENT WILL FORMALLY PURSUE THIS QUESTION WITH US. BOSTER

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NNN

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